

# Director Of Utah Division Of Water Resources Retires, New Director Appointed

Thu, Dec 26, 2019 Thu, Dec 26, 2019



Todd Adams

by Becky GINOS  
bginos@davisclipper.com

SALT LAKE CITY—The Utah Division of Water Resources is saying goodbye to longtime director Eric Millis and welcoming Todd D. Adams in his place.

“I decided in high school that a job in engineering or something related to that is what I’d like to do,” said Millis, whose last day was Dec. 16. “As I got into my college classes I found that I loved water classes. When I got a job with the Utah Division of Water Resources I thought I’d won the lottery. The job was exactly what I’d studied. It was a wonderful fit. It’s been a great career.” That career spanned 32 years, the last six as division director. “The things we do with the division are very important to the state of Utah,” he said. “We’ve worked on water projects, pipelines, wells and dams throughout the state. To work with people, especially in rural areas, has been a fun thing. We’ve done great things for local people so they’re able to have their kids and grandkids stay there with them.”

During his career, Millis worked with the legislature, the Governor’s Drought Response team, the Governor’s Water Strategy Team, the Executive Water Finance Board and served as Utah’s interstate streams commissioner as the Governor’s representative on Bear River and Colorado River issues.

“It was interesting to be on the interstate streams commission,” said Millis. “It served 40 million people from Wyoming to Mexico. There were seven states all looking out for their own interests but at the same time trying to do what would be good for all. Utah still has some development water in the Colorado river, so they’re looking at uses such as energy development.”

Adams, who started with the division in 1990, will replace Millis as the new director. He has served as deputy director since 2013.

“They got their hooks into me and I absolutely love it,” said Adams. “I’ve been involved in hydrology studies, weather modification and computer modeling for the Virgin and Bear rivers. I became the assistant director in 2006 and spent a couple of years as a legislative liaison. That was a lot of fun. I liked being involved in policy, finance and the budget.”

Adams said he prefers to be proactive rather than reactive to water issues. “For every action is a reaction. How can we do those things so we have a win, win scenario? Our projection models are for 50 years out. What can we do to have adequate water for our needs into the future?”

Both men have worked to support the division’s mission statement to “plan, conserve, develop and protect Utah’s water resources.”

“It’s the simple things that add up to a lot of water saved,” said Millis. “There’s been a lot of things throughout my career that I’ve been able to work on that have been good for the state. That’s particularly gratifying.”

Citizens have really responded well to the conservation message, he said. “There’s still a lot to do. People think we’ll just conserve ourselves out of it. But when citizens know and understand how we get water and how precious that is they’ll make the best decision and best decisions are made if you have an informed public.”

Although Millis has officially retired, he intends to stay involved. “I’ve agreed to volunteer,” he said. “But Todd is a great guy and very knowledgeable. He’ll hit the ground running and just do a wonderful job.”

“I’m excited and honored to follow the legacy of past directors,” said Adams. “But there will still be lots of things I’ll be learning.”

---